Social factors related to Iranians attitude towards Afghan immigrants residing in Iran

Factores sociales relacionados con las actitudes de los iraníes hacia los inmigrantes afganos residentes en Irán

Fatores sociais relacionados às atitudes dos iranianos em relação aos imigrantes afegãos residentes no Irã

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates factors influencing Iranian citizens' attitudes toward Afghan immigrants. It is an applied, large-scale research conducted through a survey using a descriptive-explanatory approach. Data were collected via a researcher-made Likert-scale questionnaire. The statistical population included Iranian citizens, with 384 participants selected through Cochran's formula using a three-stage (cluster, systematic, and random) sampling method. Data analysis was performed using SPSS. Findings revealed that citizens' attitudes toward Afghan immigrants were moderate both theoretically and observationally. Among contextual variables, gender and occupation showed significant differences with the attitude variable, while age, education, income, and expenses showed no significant differences, despite mean score differences. Additionally, three independent variables—social harms caused by immigrants, media propaganda, and normative beliefs—had a significant negative relationship with citizens' attitudes. However, no relationship was found between the expectation of benefits from immigrants and citizens' attitudes. Regression analysis showed that social harms, media propaganda, and normative beliefs accounted for over 19% of the variance in the dependent variable.

Keywords: Attitude, social harms, media, normative beliefs, Afghan immigrants, Iran.

RESUMEN

Esta investigación analiza los factores que influyen en la actitud de los ciudadanos iraníes hacia los inmigrantes afganos. El estudio es de naturaleza aplicada en cuanto a su objetivo y de escala amplia, utilizando un método de encuesta con un enfoque descriptivo-explicativo. Los datos fueron recopilados mediante un cuestionario elaborado por el investigador basado en la escala de Likert. La

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población estadística estuvo compuesta por ciudadanos iraníes, de los cuales 384 fueron seleccionados como muestra utilizando la fórmula de Cochran y un muestreo de tres etapas (por conglomerados, sistemático y aleatorio). Los datos fueron analizados utilizando el software SPSS. Los resultados mostraron que la actitud promedio de los ciudadanos iraníes hacia los inmigrantes afganos es de nivel medio tanto teórica como observacionalmente. Entre las variables contextuales, el género y la ocupación mostraron diferencias significativas con la variable de actitud, mientras que otras variables demográficas como la edad, la educación, los ingresos y los gastos no mostraron diferencias significativas, a pesar de las diferencias en los promedios. Además, los daños sociales, la propaganda mediática y las creencias normativas tuvieron una relación negativa y significativa con la actitud de los ciudadanos, mientras que no se observó relación entre la expectativa de beneficios de la presencia de inmigrantes y la actitud de los ciudadanos. Los resultados del análisis de regresión mostraron que estas variables explican más del 19% de los cambios en la variable dependiente.

Palabras-clave: Actitud, daños sociales, medios de comunicación, creencias normativas, inmigrantes afganos, Irán.

RESUMO

Esta pesquisa analisa os fatores que influenciam a atitude dos cidadãos iranianos em relação aos imigrantes afegãos. O estudo é de natureza aplicada em termos de objetivo e de grande escala, utilizando um método de pesquisa com uma abordagem descritivo-explicativa. Os dados foram coletados por meio de um questionário elaborado pelo pesquisador baseado na escala de Likert. A população estatística foi composta por cidadãos iranianos, dos quais 384 foram selecionados como amostra usando a fórmula de Cochran e um método de amostragem em três etapas (por conglomerados, sistemática e aleatória). A análise dos dados foi realizada com o software SPSS. Os resultados mostraram que a atitude média dos cidadãos iranianos em relação aos imigrantes afegãos é de nível médio, tanto teoricamente quanto observacionalmente. Entre as variáveis contextuais, gênero e ocupação apresentaram diferenças significativas em relação à variável atitude, enquanto idade, escolaridade, renda e despesas não apresentaram diferenças significativas, apesar das diferenças nas médias. Além disso, danos sociais, propaganda da mídia e crenças normativas mostraram uma relação negativa e significativa com a atitude dos cidadãos, enquanto não foi observada relação entre a expectativa de benefícios da presença dos imigrantes e a atitude dos cidadãos. Os resultados da análise de regressão indicaram que essas variáveis explicam mais de 19% das variações na variável dependente.

Palavras-chave: Atitude, danos sociais, mídia, crenças normativas, imigrantes afegãos, Irã.

1 INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

Migration and human mobility have existed throughout the history of humankind and are as old as human civilization itself (Jamshidiha & Anbari, 2003: 44). Moreover, migration is a multidimensional phenomenon that affects all aspects of a human society's life and even extends its impact to the environment and the animal world. Consequently, all branches of science, particularly in the field of social sciences – from sociology and demography to history, politics, economics, psychology, and geography – have sought to define, analyze, and explain the factors, types, motivations, advantages, and disadvantages of this historical and

universal phenomenon. According to the United Nations Demographic Dictionary, migration is a form of geographical or spatial mobility that occurs between two geographical units. This geographical movement involves a change of residence from the origin or point of departure to the destination or point of arrival. Such migrations are referred to as permanent migrations and must be distinguished from other forms of population movements that do not entail a permanent change of residence (Zanjani, 2019: 211-212).

For years, this global, pervasive, fluid, and multidimensional phenomenon has been considered one of the major global challenges (Pouya & Emami, 2005: 2). Migration influences geography, history, identity, economy, culture, and politics. Cross-border migration has been so problematic and consequential that the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) has referred to international migration as the "humanitarian crisis of our time" (Lucas & Meyer, 2005: 281).

Today, international migration has become the focal point of attention for many scholars and policymakers, owing to the intensity and wide-ranging consequences of migration, to the extent that concepts such as the "Age of Migration" by Castles and Miller (1998) and the "Global City" by Sassen (2001) have been introduced (Foroutan, 2017: 74). Migration not only influences the structure and composition of populations but also impacts, to varying degrees, the ethnic, racial, and cultural composition of destination countries. Furthermore, it affects the economic, social, political, and cultural spheres of these countries (Foroutan, 2017: 78).

Despite all this, the mass migration of Afghans to Iran began following the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 and has continued ever since, with constant flows of Afghan migrants into Iran. Due to various factors, including the lack of human, economic, and cultural capital, these migrants have predominantly been employed in occupations such as construction work, security guarding, small-scale retail, kiln labor, well-digging, agricultural work, unskilled labor, street vending, livestock farming, shepherding, road construction, welding, and automobile repair, among other similar jobs (Sadeghi, 2007: 8).

For more than four decades, millions of Afghans have migrated to Iran for various political, economic, cultural, religious, and neighboring reasons, and about five million legal and illegal Afghan immigrants are living in different regions of Iran according to the authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The second, third, and even fourth generations have been born in this country and thousands of these immigrants have married the Iranians and a large number of these immigrants have no intention of leaving this country under any circumstances and have selected this land as their homeland. However, there have been social incompatibilities, various obstacles in social integration process, negative attitudes, and blackening prejudices towards these immigrants (Sadeghi, 2007).

This is while these immigrants face many challenges and limitations in the Iranian society and they are still recognized as outsiders and alien after more than four decades. This rejection (depilation) and alienation, lack of permission to adapt and match, and a weak level of interactions and ties with the immigrant society, may have several different

factors. However, one of the most important and determining factors of this alienation, humiliation, and a poor level of interactions and ties is related to the attitudes of the host society towards these immigrants. The lived experience of every Afghan immigrant in Iran has been accompanied by stigmatization and demeaning labels, humiliation, insults, humiliation, alienation, discrimination, rejection (depilation), negative emotions, misrecognition, and undesirable behaviors from the host society (Ahmadrash and Eidi, 2017).

It is clear that this type of views and encounters are caused by the negative attitudes of the host society towards these immigrants. Attitudes play a very important role in shaping the people's behavior and social life. In fact, our behavior and performance are part of our attitude, but attitude plays a decisive role in directing the people's behavior and performance. On the other hand, being aware of people's attitudes makes it possible to predict and control their behavior (Rezaei and Salimi, 91: 2013). Knowing about the people's attitude helps us know people's personality and conduct in addition to predicting people's behavior and controlling it, and on the other hand, measuring people's attitude helps us diagnose our judgements to avoid uninformed judgments and information about the people's attitude also helps us in scientific measurements (Sharfuddin, 86: 1998).

Therefore, it is very important and necessary that we investigate and analyze the determining factors of these attitudes in addition to measuring the attitude of the Iranian citizens towards Afghan immigrants. Therefore, the main aim of this research is to determine the factors influencing attitude of Iranian citizens towards the Afghan immigrants.

2 THEORETICAL AND EXPERIMENTAL LITERATURE REVIEW

Palizdan (2024), Palizdan conducted a descriptive-survey study aimed at examining the sociological attitudes of Shiraz citizens toward Afghan immigrants. Using a simple random sampling method and a researcher-made questionnaire (26 items), data from citizens in 2023 were collected. Results from Pearson's correlation test showed a significant relationship between literacy level, ethnicity, religious affiliation (Shia/Sunni), economic status, sense of security, and attitudes toward Afghan immigrants.

Ruhani et al. (2024), Ruhani and colleagues explored the identity formation process among young Afghan immigrants in Yazd through a qualitative study employing grounded theory. Interviews with 21 teenagers revealed major categories such as double identity rejection, lived experiences of de-identification, and structural limitations. The study found that these youths sought to form identities independent of nationalistic values, utilizing skill-based identifications to navigate identity crises in the host society.

Zandi-Navgran et al. (2022), Through theoretical coding analysis of interviews, Zandi-Navgran and colleagues identified "two-way demarcation" as the core process shaping Afghan immigrants' experiences of social distance in Iran. Findings highlighted legal, socio-economic, and

emotional barriers leading to feelings of alienation and institutional discrimination. The research showed that restricted access to citizenship rights perpetuates ethnic stratification and formalizes immigrants' marginalized status.

Maghsoudi (2022), Maghsoudi critically examined Iran's fragmented policies toward Afghan immigrants, applying John W. Berry's socialization strategies. The study argued that ineffective legislation and lack of a comprehensive socialization program have been the main factors impeding the integration of Afghan immigrants, resulting in significant political, social, cultural, and security-related challenges for Iran.

Keshavarz Ghasemi and Naderpour (2018) found in a research that the citizens of Qazvin County do not have a favorable attitude towards Afghans with 77.66% average negative responses. Fazeli Javid (2017) has shown in a research that the presence of negative attitudes, rejection, discrimination, and humiliation has made the identification-finding process of the immigrant children face a fundamental problem. Ahmadresh and Eidi (2017) have shown in a study that the lived experiences of Afghan immigrants indicate the presence of a socio-cultural confront with the host society in the studied area in both the objective and subjective aspects. In a research, Vosooghi and Mohseni (2016) found that the highest negative attitude of citizens towards Afghan immigrants is related to the social harms variable. Rouhani and Anbarlou (2016) have concluded in a research that the fear of attack and aggression by immigrants has been taught to citizens. Songhori et al. (2014) found in a research that Afghan immigrants experience discrimination, insult, rejection, and social stigma in the host society. Bigvand and Rajabloo (2014) have shown in a research that:

1) There is an inverse relationship between the Gini coefficient index of societies and the rate of acceptance of foreign immigrants.

2) There is an inverse relationship between the level of human development and the percentage of the population below the poverty line and the Gini coefficient.

3) The level of human development does not have a direct effect on the rate of acceptance of foreign immigrants, but it has an indirect effect on the rate of acceptance of immigrants through other variables, such as the Gini coefficient.

4) The unemployment rate only affects the level of human development of societies.

In reviewing previous research, it becomes clear that the main focus has been on understanding Iranian citizens' attitudes toward Afghan immigrants, analyzing the identity formation process among immigrants, exploring mechanisms of social distancing, and evaluating macro-level migration policies. These studies, mostly using descriptive, qualitative, or analytical methods, have emphasized issues such as immigrant alienation, structural discrimination, identity crises, social threats, and the consequences of fragmented migration policies. The findings reveal that negative attitudes toward Afghan immigrants are widespread, influenced not only by individual factors but also by broader structural, economic, and cultural dynamics. Additionally, the social gaps between immigrants

and the host society have significantly hindered the integration process for Afghans in Iran.

Against this background, the innovation of the present study lies in its comprehensive approach to analyzing the social factors associated with Iranians' attitudes toward Afghan immigrants residing in Iran. Unlike previous studies that mainly focused either on immigrants' experiences or on policy analysis, this research employs a quantitative methodology and adopts a multidimensional framework that examines key factors such as socioeconomic status, sense of security, ethnicity, and religion. This provides a more holistic and analytically rich understanding compared to earlier work. Another major strength of the current study is its national-level focus rather than being limited to a single region, thereby enhancing the generalizability of the findings and offering more actionable policy insights. By linking social factors directly to public attitudes, this study establishes a robust analytical framework for better understanding the dynamics of immigrant acceptance and exclusion in Iranian society.

In terms of theory, attitude is used as the equivalent of perception, point of view, feedback, psychological state, mindset, tendency, method, belief, feelings, values, mentality, perspective, belief, style, etc. (Gold and Kolb, 2005: 863). The attitude, as defined by "Gold and Kolb", is very important in shaping people's behavior and social life. Allport (1935) defines the attitude as a nervous state or mental readiness that is acquired and organized through experience. Each attitude has three main components. First; the cognitive or perceptual components of attitude (beliefs, perceptions, and a set of people's awareness or knowledge about a phenomenon) are included in this category, that is, the human being knows in his/her own mind why a phenomenon is good or bad. Cognitive structures are mental foundations with the help of which people interpret the meaning and concept of persons, objects, events, and behaviors. Second, the emotional components of attitude (feelings, motives, pleasant or unpleasant interests towards objects, people, groups). This section of attitude determines of people's emotions in total whether negative or positive relative to the phenomena. Knowing this section of the attitude determines the readiness of people for material and spiritual connection and separation. Third, the behavioral section (includes the parts of people's motivation towards an issue, readiness for action or behavior towards that issue) (Kirimi, 2000).

Fishbein & Ajzen believed that behavior is caused by a chain of factors. The circle before the behavior emergence is the intention and willingness to perform the behavior. The phenomenon of intention and willingness in itself is a function of attitude towards that behavior and mental norm. Attitude towards behavior is a personal factor that determines intentions. Unlike the general attitudes towards institutions, people or objects, this attitude shows a positive or negative evaluation of the specific behavior in question. The second determinant of intention, i.e. subjective norm, is a person's perception of social pressure to perform or not to perform the behavior. Generally speaking, people intend to perform a behavior when they evaluate it to be positive and believe that other important persons think that they (people) should perform this

behavior. This theory assumes that the relative importance of attitude to behavior and mental norm depends to some extent on the intention under investigation. For some intentions, attitudinal considerations are more important than normative ones while for other intentions, normative considerations prevail (Javadi Yeganeh and Kazemi, 2011).

In the Integrated Threat Theory of prejudice, threat perception constitutes the fundamental principle underlying the development of negative attitudes and helps to explain the perception of social distance toward out-groups (Raijman, 2013). According to this theory, threat perception stems from four sources, each contributing to negative views and social distance toward out-groups: realistic threats, symbolic threats, intergroup anxiety, and negative stereotypes.

Realistic threat refers to the fear among in-group members of the reduction of available resources. In this case, individuals with lower economic and social status feel that they are competing with out-group members for scarce resources (Raijman, 2013). Symbolic threat arises from differences between groups in relation to moral values, culture, and religious beliefs. This threat becomes more pronounced when in-group members fear cultural dominance by outsiders and the loss of their own way of life (Stephan et al., 1999).

Intergroup anxiety pertains to feelings of anxiety, threat, and concern for personal security that emerge during interactions between in--group and out-group members (Stewart et al., 2009). Negative stereotypes form the basis for expectations about the behavior of out-group members (Hamilton et al., 1990) and often lead to hostility (Kay & Jost, 2003).

In Power Theory, intergroup relations are understood as a function of the groups' competitive positions (Giles & Hertz, 1994: 317). If the dominant group perceives the minority group as a serious threat to its interests (for example, regarding wages, employment, housing, private or public welfare, tax burdens, and so forth), it is likely to display more hostile behavior compared to situations where it perceives such threats as minimal (Bobo, 2004; Citrin et al., 1997).

Thus, individuals with lower socio-economic status — who tend to feel that they are in greater competition with out-groups — develop a stronger perception of threat, which in turn makes them particularly sensitive to prejudicial attitudes (Dustmann & Preston, 2007; Esses et al., 2001; Quillian, 1995).

Bogardus (1993) defines the concept of social distance as the degree of closeness or acceptance between individuals or groups of individuals (such as occupational, religious, or educational groups). While Bogardus's concept describes a state, social distancing refers to a process that can occur at societal, group, or individual levels.

Social distancing can become institutionalized and perpetuated through mechanisms such as restricted access to citizenship or stratification systems in which ethnic boundaries shape access to specific positions (Alba & Nee, 2003: 43).

On the attitude and feelings of natives towards immigrants, Fetters (2000) believes that he has divided the attitude towards foreign immigrants and anti-immigrant feelings into three categories:

A) Marginal factors: the encountering of immigrants' culture with native culture and cultural conflicts;

B) Personal interests: the economic impact of an immigrant on native people (economic conflicts);

C) People's communication: vicinity and neighborhood and national proximity are influential in the attitude of natives and immigrants.

Regarding the attitude of natives towards immigrants, Fachini and Maida (2006) believe that the economic conditions and low education of the host society increase the negative attitude towards foreign immigrants, while the level and kind of attitude of the host people has no relationships with their level of literacy towards immigrants. Experiences and mental stereotypes that divide the people into insider and non-insider groups, the quality of cultural communications, mental schemas, etc., are influential on the attitudes among immigrants and natives (Vosooghi and Mohseni, 2016).

Zygmunt Bauman and Turisten Selin believe that the chaos created by immigrants in an organized society is a challenge to cultural axioms and a push for social movement, and this cultural challenge and social movement are influential in determining the attitudes of natives and immigrants towards each other (Khodai, 2010: 57).

Turistan Selin also believes in the cultural conflict between natives and immigrants as this conflict, struggle, and non-conformity have caused the increase in crimes and social anomalies and in turn affects the mutual attitudes of natives and immigrants.

Todd (1962) and Becker (1964) believe that the job market is a competitive arena and the most important criterion for job and economic success is individual efficiency and capabilities. Although ethnicity, immigration, etc. do not play a decisive role in this competitive market, the groups without human capital are pushed out of this competition, and consequently, attitudes towards them change as their social bases decrease. New-comer immigrants are usually not familiar with the labor market of the new society or have fewer human capitals, so they experience tension and inconsistency in receiving the attitudes of the destination society (ibid. 200).

The theoretical framework of this study integrates various perspectives on attitude formation, prejudice, and intergroup relations, particularly in the context of Afghan immigrants in Iran. Attitude, as conceptualized by Gold and Kolb (2005), plays a crucial role in shaping human behavior, encompassing cognitive, emotional, and behavioral components. The cognitive component refers to the beliefs and perceptions that influence how people understand phenomena, while the emotional aspect deals with feelings and motives that drive individuals' responses. The behavioral component highlights the actions and readiness to act upon these beliefs and feelings. In this framework, the theory posits that attitudes are formed not only through individual experiences but also through social norms and collective perceptions. Specifically, Fishbein and Ajzen's theory links attitudes to behavior via intention and social pressure, asserting that people are more likely to perform behaviors they view positively and that others expect them to perform.

Further, the Integrated Threat Theory suggests that attitudes towards out-groups, such as Afghan immigrants, are shaped by perceived threats—realistic, symbolic, intergroup anxiety, and negative stereotypes. These threats influence the social distance between groups, as people are more likely to develop negative attitudes toward out-group members when they perceive competition for resources, cultural dominance, or security concerns. Additionally, Power Theory links intergroup attitudes to the socio-economic position of groups, arguing that dominant groups tend to view minority groups as threats when their interests are at stake. Social distancing, as described by Bogardus, represents a process through which these negative perceptions can be institutionalized, reinforcing inequality. The theoretical framework, therefore, highlights the complex interaction between individual attitudes, societal norms, and the broader socio-economic context in shaping the attitudes of Iranians toward Afghan immigrants. This study aims to uncover these dynamics while focusing on social factors such as literacy, ethnicity, economic status, and security, which influence public attitudes toward immigration.

In comparison to past studies, this research offers a more comprehensive exploration by examining a wider range of social factors and their specific impacts on attitudes towards Afghan immigrants. By integrating both individual and collective perspectives on prejudice and social distance, the study contributes to a deeper understanding of how socio-economic, cultural, and political variables interact to shape public opinion. Additionally, the study's emphasis on the socio-cultural aspects of Iranian attitudes towards Afghan immigrants addresses gaps in existing literature, which has often focused narrowly on one-dimensional aspects of the immigrant experience. The strength of this research lies in its ability to connect individual attitudes to broader social and institutional factors, providing a more holistic view of the challenges faced by Afghan immigrants in Iran.

4 RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

1) The demographic characteristics of Iranian correlate to their attitude towards Afghan immigrants.

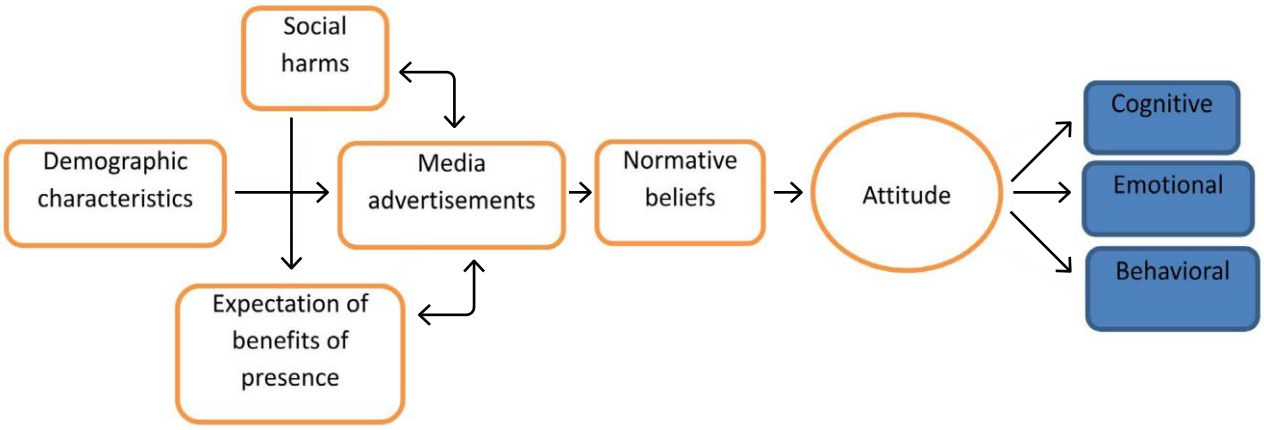
2) The social harms of immigrants is related to the attitude of Iranian citizens towards them.

3) The negative attitudes of Iranian people towards Afghan immigrants are related to mass media advertisements and reports.

4) The attitude of the Iranian people towards the immigrants is related to their expectations of the benefits of the presence of immigrants.

5) Normative beliefs of Iranian citizens have a significant relationship with their attitude towards immigrants

5 THEORICAL MODEL OF RESEARCH



6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is cross-sectional in terms of time, extensive in terms of scope, applied in terms of purpose, and survey in descriptive-explanatory type in terms of method of implementation. Its theoretical bases have been implemented through documentation and electronic research. The statistical population of the research includes the Iranian Iranian citizens who are over 18 years old. Therefore, the statistical population of the research is over 100,000 people, of which 384 people were determined as the sample size by Cochran's formula and Morgan's table. The cluster sampling method had three steps. Clusters or localities were selected in the first step. Families were systematically selected in the second step and one of the citizens over 18 years of age was selected randomly in the family in the third step. The data collection was made by researcher-made questionnaires whose validity and reliability were confirmed. The questionnaire was prepared based on the Likert scale and completed among the selected samples of the statistical population. Then, the collected data was entered into SPSS software. Description, analysis, and inference of the data were conducted after indexing and checking the data normality.

7 RESEARCH FINDINGS

The findings showed that 52.6% of the respondents are female and 47.4% are male. 32.3% were between 18-25 years old, 26.1% were between 26-35 years old, 22.8% were between 36-45 years old, 12.4% were between 46-55 years old, and 6.5% were over 56 years old. Based on the job, the respondents are divided into different groups, including: 27.1% unemployed, 8.3% government employees, 18.9% students, 6.4% private companies' employees, 5.4% teachers, 4.6% housewives, and 29.3% freelancers have been reported. Based on income, 11.7% people had income between 1 and 4 million Tomans, 57.4% had income between 5-9 million Tomans, and 30.9% had income higher than 9 million Tomans. And based on the

amount of monthly expenses, 17.8% reported less than 4 million Tomans, 56.2% between 5 and 9 million Tomans, and 26% reported more than 9 million Tomans. Based on educations, 5.9% of the respondents were illiterate, 12.8% have elementary education, 31.9% have secondary and high school education, and 49.5% have university education. Finally, based on marital status, 29.9% were single, 66.7% were married, and 3.5% were divorced or lost their spouse or wife.

Table 1: The attitude of Iranian citizens towards Afghan immigrants and the averages

	Lower bound	**Upper bound**	**Theoretical mean**	**Standard deviation**	**Observed mean**	**t**	**sig**
Attitude of Iranian citizens towards Afghan immigrants	33	74	53.5	7.226	53.96	1.231	0.219
Cognitive aspect of attitude	10	27	18.5	2.889	18.25	-1.618	0.107
Emotional aspect of attitude	6	29	17.57	3.958	18.57	5.289	0.000
Behavioral aspect of attitude	7	25	16	3.015	17	6.516	0.000
Social harms	15	45	30	6.134	28.6	-4.416	0.000
Media advertisements	9	37	23	5.621	22.3	-2.371	0.018
Expectation of the benefits of presence	4	19	11.5	2.733	9.86	-11.65	0.000
Normative beliefs	4	20	12	3.311	11.82	-1.053	0.293

Table 1 shows that: The average score of the attitude is about 54, the upper bound of which is 74 and the lower one is 33. The one sample t-test also showed that there is no difference between the theoretical average and the observed average in attitude, and therefore, the attitude of Iranian citizens towards immigrants is average. The behavioral aspect has the lowest score among the aspects of attitude. Questions were asked in the behavioral aspect that measure the willingness of these citizens with Afghan immigrants in social, cultural, economic, kinship, and family interactions. The difference between theoretical and observed average is not significant in cognitive aspect, but it is significant in emotional and behavioral aspects. The average theoretical scores in the independent variables, except for normative beliefs, are all significant with the observed average.

Table 2: Results of t-test between the gender variable and the attitude of Iranian citizens towards Afghan immigrants

	Group	Number	Mean attitude score	T	Sig
Gender	women	190	54/1053	2.01	0.047
	men	171	53/7895		

Based on table 2, it can be seen that the attitude of both genders towards Afghan immigrants has a significant difference (sig=0.047).

Table 3: F-test results between demographic variables and the attitude of Iranian citizens towards Afghan immigrants

Variable	Group	Mean attitude score	F	Sig
Marital status	Single	54.5	0.262	0.902
	Married	53.86		
	Divorced. Widow	52.7		
Job	Unemployed	53.28	0.154	0.017
	Self-employed(freelancer)	32.79		
	Government's employee	54.3		
	Teacher	52.55		
	Private employee	55.17		
	Student	55		
	Housekeeper	56.37		
Educations	Illiterate	53	1.636	0.181
	Primary	52.93		
	Middle and high school	53.46		
	University	54.91		
Income	From 1 to 4 million Tomans	54.9	0.355	0.701
	From 5 to 9 million Tomans	53.67		
	10 million and higher	53.85		
Expense	From 1 to 4 million Tomans	54.28	0.468	.6270
	From 5 to 9 million Tomans	53.88		
	10 million and higher	53.72		

In table 3, the f-test report shows that the single people have a more positive attitude towards these immigrants than the married ones, but this difference is not statistically significant (sig=0.902). The attitude of people in different occupations is also significant, as can be seen in the table, housewives and employees of private companies have a more positive attitude towards Afghan immigrants than other occupational groups, and this difference is reported as (sig=0.017). Regarding the relationship between education level and attitude, although there is a difference in the average scores among different education levels, these two variables do not have a significant relationship with the value (sig=0.181). The grouped variables of income and monthly expenses show that no significant relationship was reported between the variable of monthly income and attitude with value (sig=0.701) and monthly family expenses and attitude status with value (sig=0.627).

Table 4: Pearson correlation test results between different variables and the attitude of Iranian citizens towards Afghan immigrants

Statistical index Hypothesis	Pearson's correlation coefficient (r)	Significance level
Relationship between age and attitude	-0.055	0.307
Relationship between immigrants' social harms and attitudes	-0.326	0.000
Relationship between media programs and advertisements and Attitude	-0.69	0.001
Expectations of the benefits of the presence of immigrants and attitude	0.018	0.734
Relationship between normative beliefs of Iranian citizens towards Afghan immigrants and attitude	-0.289	0.000

Table 4 shows that there is a negative relationship between age and attitude, but this relationship is not reported to be significant with the level (sig=0.307). A negative and significant relationship (sig=0.000) can be seen between the variable of social harms of these immigrants and the attitude of Iranian citizens towards them. A negative relationship with a significant level (sig=0.001) has been reported between programs and media advertisements and attitude. According to the table above, no significant relationship (sig=0.734) has been reported between the variable of expectations of the benefits of presence and the dependent variable. However, a negative and significant relationship (sig=0.000) has been reported between the variable of normative beliefs of Iranian citizens towards these immigrants and the attitudes of these citizens towards these immigrants.

Table 5: Regression results of the effect of the investigated variables on attitude

Index	Correlation coefficient (R)	R^2	Adjusted R^2	F	Level of significance
Amount	0.439	0.193	0.170	8.552	0.000

Table 6: Statistical determinants, amount and direction of the effect of the studied variables on the attitude

Variable	**Nonstandard coefficient**	**Standard error**	**Standard beta**	**T**	**level Significance**
constant number	68.809	3.123	-	21.93	0.000
Social harms	-0.407	0.081	-.329	5.054	0.000
Media advertisements	0.089	0.079	0.066	1.116	0.045
Effects of normative beliefs	-0.434	0.162	-0.176	-2.681	0.008

In table 5, the step-by-step regression analysis shows that the correlation of the total of independent variables with the dependent variable with a correlation coefficient (R=0.439) and with regard to R^2 more than 19% of the range of the dependent variable by the variables of social harms, media advertisements, and the effects of normative beliefs are explained and the significance level of the model (sig=0.001) is reported.

8 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Millions of Afghani immigrants have been living legally and illegally in the Islamic Republic of Iran for more than forty years, and as an undeniable fact, this huge population is known as one of the social problems and phenomena in this country. Considering the realities of the Iranian society, the functions of these immigrants in the destination society, the repulsions of the origin society, the dependencies and affections of these immigrants in the Iranian society and many other factors; it can be concluded that at least a large part of this million population will be permanent residents of the Iranian society. As the researches of Abbasi Shavazi et al. (2016) and Jamshidiha and Anbari (2004) also confirm this hypothesis (permanent and long-term presence of these immigrants in Iranian society). This is while the facts and research also show that the interactions and ties of these two immigrant and host societies are not in direction of adaptation, acceptance, and conformation, and despite the presence of immigrants in all non-prohibited areas and metropolises, the society and culture of the immigrants can be seen apart from the culture of Iran, and there are huge gaps between these two societies, which are considered to be due to the negative attitudes of the host society towards these immigrants. These weak attitudes and relationships (ties) have placed many limitations and challenges in the lives of these immigrants since the attitudes is very important in shaping the people's behavior and social life. In fact, our behavior and performance are part of our attitude, but attitude plays a decisive role in directing the people's behavior and type of performance (Shaterian et al., 2015).

This research was implemented as survey using a researcher-made questionnaire tool with a descriptive-explanatory approach. The statistical population of this research were the citizens of who were over 18 years old and (384) of them were determined by Cochran's formula and Morgan's table as the sample size. The cluster sampling method had three steps. Clusters or localities were selected in the first step. Families were selected systematically in the second steps and one of the citizens over 18 years old of age was selected randomly in the family in the third step.

The results of the t-test showed that the gender variable had a positive and significant relationship with the participants' attitude towards the Afghan immigrants. Women had more positive attitudes than men. The results of the f-test showed that in terms of occupation, housewives and employees of private institutions had more positive attitudes than other groups; Unemployed and freelancers groups have the lowest scores in attitude. The interpretation of this relationship is that, on the one hand, a part of attitude creates emotions, and women have more emotions than men, and on the other hand, these immigrants are not considered as job competitors of women. In addition, native and immigrant women have more neighborly interactions with each other. Regarding the occupational groups, the groups that consider these immigrants as their job-economic competitors have had more negative attitudes towards them. Therefore, this part of the research findings is in line with the theories of Fetzer (2000) and Fachini and Maida (2006) about job-economic competitions

between immigrants and natives, as well as how to communicate with neighbors, and confirms the findings of Shaterian et al. (2016). Ahmad Roshd and Eidi (2017) and Vosooghi and Mohseni (2016). However, variables such as age, marital status, monthly expenses and income had no significant relationship with the dependent variable. The main reason is that the discourse environment against the Afghan immigrants is mainly associated with rejection and alienation, and the researches of Rouhani and Anbarloo (2015 and 2016) show that even Afghans are taught to fear the school and family. Regarding monthly expenses and income, the adoption of the research is that the main dissatisfaction of the Iranians with the presence of these immigrants is due to social, security, and cultural complications and harms, and the interpretation of these findings is in line with the Anthony Giddens theory. Giddens believed that the first harm and effect of international migration is social and cultural conflicts between immigrants and hosts (Boroumandzadeh and Nobakht, 2011).

The results of the Pearson correlation test showed that the social harms of these immigrants have a negative and significant relationship with the immigrants' attitudes, that is, as the extent of harms of these immigrants' increases, the attitudes of the hosts towards them also turns more negative and vice versa. This part of the findings is in line with confirming the theories of Zygmunt Bauman and Turisten Selin. They maintained that the culture of international immigrants is a push and a movement towards the disorder of natives' culture, and the immigrant's transgression (breaking of norm) in the host society is considered a natural phenomenon due to different socialization and lack of understanding of the norms and expectations of the host society (Khodaei, 2010). This section of the research results confirms the findings of Vosooghi and Mohseni (2016) and Keshavarz Ghasemi and Naderpour (2018).

Another part of the findings of this research showed that there is a negative and significant relationship between the media advertisements and programs and citizens' attitudes towards Afghan immigrants. The interpretation and explanation of the research regarding the negative relationship between media advertisements variable and the attitude of Iranian citizens towards these immigrants is that; No matter how much the media advertisements and programs are negative and blackening against Afghan immigrants, the attitudes of the Iranian audiences towards these immigrants will become negative. This part of the findings confirms those of Farmanfarmaei and Jafarzad (2018) and Ahmadi (2017) and also is in line with the viewpoints of sociologists of mass communication devices, which influence and directs the media, attitudes, and worldviews of people (Saroukhani, 2005).

Another part of the findings of this research is that the normative beliefs of Iranian citizens towards these immigrants had a negative and significant relationship with the attitudes of these citizens towards Afghan immigrants. The interpretation and explanation of this research is that: Whatever the mental stereotypes and beliefs are negative and shaped, the attitudes will also be negative. From a theoretical point of view, the result of the test of the relationship between these two variables was in line with "Berry" theory. He believes that the integration and

adaptation of immigrants in the destination society depends on various factors, one of these factors is the knowledge (cognitions) and beliefs of the immigrants from the characteristics of the host society. If these cognitions and beliefs are positive; then the attitude, adaptation, and integration will be positive and vice versa. From an empirical point of view, the result of the test of the relationship between these two variables is considered to be in line with the research of Homa Hoodfer (2007) and Sadeghi Fasaei Nazari (2016).

The regression results of this research also showed that the variables of social harms, media advertisements, and normative beliefs account for more than 19% of the range of changes in the dependent variable. In aggregate, the average attitude of Iranian citizens towards the Afghan immigrants is average in terms of theory and observation. Since these immigrants are not a temporary phenomenon and some of their limitations and problems depend on the attitude of the host society, therefore, this research offers the following executive suggestions to the authorities in charge of the affair based on its findings.

1) Promotion of immigration literature in the texts of schools, universities, and educational centers so that the atmosphere (environment) of the society is softened in terms of culture and socialization in front of immigrants and the ways of attraction and acceptance get paved.

2) Media's giving awareness and advertisements about the realities of immigration, the positive functions and advantages of immigrants in a realistic and fair manner.

3) Planning and implementation of cultural programs to amend the beliefs and mental stereotypes of the Iranian citizens against the Afghan immigrants;

4) Raising awareness of the naturalness of some immigration harms and the incorrectness of judgments and wholistic analogies.

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